

CADBURY *means Quality*

FEB 1 1946

PUNCH



JANUARY
30
1946

Vol. CCX
No. 5482

For conditions of sale and supply of Punch
see bottom of last page of text

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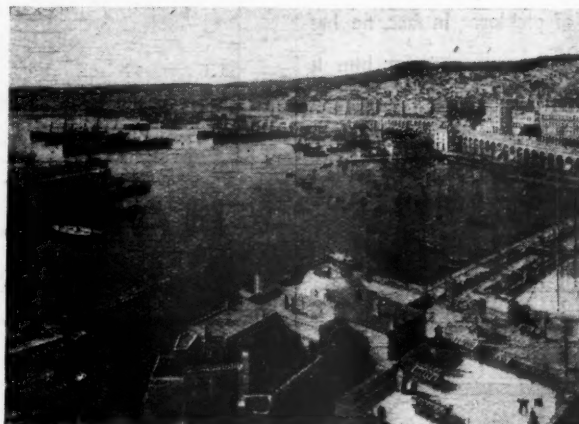
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can never repay the debt we owe them; but we can help to look after those they have left behind and especially to educate their children. That is one of the most important branches of the work the Army Benevolent Fund is doing to help service and ex-service men and women and their dependants. In an army of four and a quarter millions there are inevitably thousands of cases of hardship which Government schemes of relief cannot cover. The Army Benevolent Fund, by grants to Military Charities, helps to provide the financial assistance that is so sorely needed and has been so deeply deserved.

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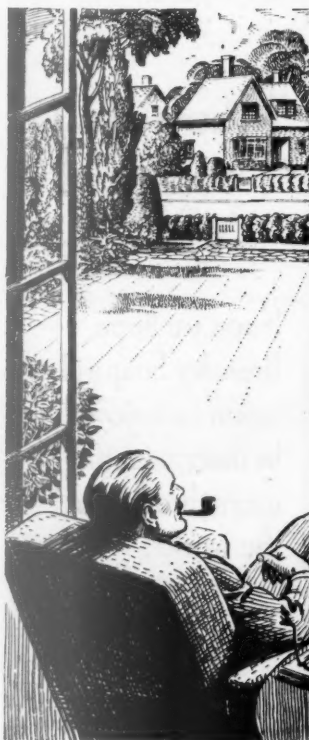
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I'm not keen to dash about at the week-end. I'd rather spend it in my garden—quiet, cool and restful. I brought it to life again with banks of flowers. I nursed its lawns back to soft green velvet with my Atco. The time and money spent on my garden are a rich investment in health, interest and contentment.

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CHARLES H. PUGH LTD
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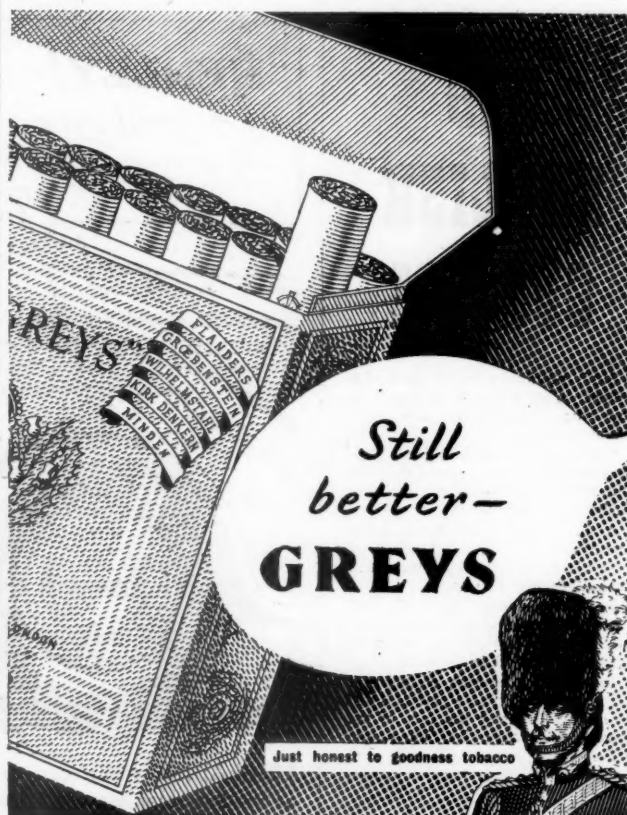
Alice was just in time to hear the White Rabbit say, "Oh, my fur and whiskers, I shall be late for the party and all the Crawford's Cream Crackers will have gone!"



After Tansiel
by permission
of Messrs.
MACMILLAN
& Co. Ltd.



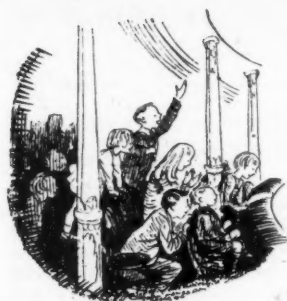
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Still
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GREYS

Just honest to goodness tobacco

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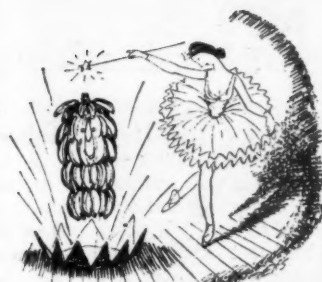
PUNCH

Or

The London Charivari

Vol. CCX No. 5482

January 30 1946



Charivaria

WE understand that there has been a very poor response to the appeal for Government Departments to share each others' block of flats.

Victory celebrations are still being held in various parts of the country and many people are hopeful that other indications of peace may ultimately become apparent.



A chess game played by post between enthusiasts in London and Australia respectively has been drawn after nine years. This brings up the question as to whether extra time should be played.

A Texas cowboy is making a name as a writer of patriotic poems, and looks like becoming America's Poet Lariat.

"He told me 'I want all my tenants to have the amenities I myself enjoy—bath, electric light and cooking and up-to-date sewerage. It will cost a great deal of I'm prepared to finish the job money. I want to rehouse within a year if I can get the more than 1,500 cottagers, and labour and arrange permits. Some of the cottagers may instal all the latest gadgets for not take too kindly to new the time when younger ten-fangled ideas, but I intend to ants take over.'"

Ants seem to have taken over already.

Inquiry reveals that to the modern child the most puzzling thing about bananas is why the containers don't have to be sent back for refilling.

The point arises: Can a demobilized private expect to get back his civilian position as an important business executive now that it is filled by the office-boy who has got a commission in the A.T.C.?

Recent cold spells have roused the authorities to such an extent that we may soon expect a Government statement to the effect that they will shortly be able to guarantee ample fuel supplies for the months when we shan't need them.

The editor of a London daily goes for long country rambles every week-end. Later he hopes to circularize his regular readers announcing that he has heard the first cuckoo this year.

"Successful gardeners seem to make plants grow by sheer will power," says a psychologist. Just now they are busy forcing rhubarb to be early.

The Man with the Serious Look

"His deep-set eyes were so narrowed that chest and eyebrows seemed to meet."—From a novel.

The favourites have won in many dog-races recently. Jubilant backers, however, strenuously deny that book-makers have been slightly doped to make them slow off the mark.



A Word in Season

I OFTEN think that midwinter—midwinter in London—is the loveliest time in all the pageant of the Metropolitan year; midwinter at early dawn when the rime is on the pane, and the virgin carpet of the snow that is laid up to our little porch is marked with the tiny traceries of bird-feet where brother thrush and friend robin have hopped about their homely ways; not stamped as yet with the ruder impress of man-boots as it will be when comrade milk and sister postman have ploughed their path to the front door and Dan plumber is more than a mere distant voice on the telephone. Ring out, wild bells! Dan plumber will come in his own good time and so will uncle carpenter.

Now is the moment perhaps for an early walk, or better still, a brisk run across the common or the undulating slopes of our wide heath-land, letting out the breath, as we jog joyously forward, in great white pants, and watching the morn unfold from dark to lighter grey. Every branch, every twig, every blade of green is articulated or even reticulated in shining whiteness, as though for our special benefit father frost had touched them over-night, with his own mysterious pail of distemper, that neglects no thorn or pebble or fading leaf nor toe-less boot in a half-abandoned cabbage plot.

Or perhaps there is a piece of water, duck-haunted (and how many of our less-known aquatic fowl do haunt the reedy edges of our London ponds—the tumbrel, the whipper, the bochard, the meal, the shy potterel, and even the saw-billed spew); and here ascending to the highest diving-board we may plunge with what a sense of increased vitality on to the frozen surface of the mere, rubbing the head ruefully if maybe the ice has proved too hard to penetrate and calling to John Keeper for his sledge-hammer before we make a second essay. What a glow from the brief rubbing with the coarse towel! What a sense of kinship with Mother Nature as we wring the green ooze from our matted hair!

Or again, we may take our little cart, rough-framed from rude pieces of board, with its wooden wheels, and towing it behind us with umbrella for shaft, trot gaily forth to gather firewood, that has cracked away and fallen over-night in glade and spinney (for this waste of our common is free for all) and none can say us neigh as we pile it with numb but nimble fingers into our improvised trolley; and how gladly home once more to a great meal of yester e'en's potatoes fried in wholesome whale oil and liberally besprinkled with powdered egg!

Or maybe there is a great wall of amber or indigo fog to confront us as we gaze from our bedroom casement on to the facing scene, and clap our hands with delight at the infinite variety of London's changing moods; and if we are not the first to point out the mystery and strange unreal beauty of our great city in fog-time, yet we add our voice again to the chorus, thinking of the weird abrupt encounters, the cheery oaths, the bewildered traffic and the slipping horses, the patient queues showered with spadefuls of gravel from cousin municipal carter, as they await the monstrous apparition of the unpermitted bus that passes them by.

Who shall be first at the office in days like these? That is our first thought, as the train lingers in the tunnel, or stops jerkily in the tenebrous shelter of some wayside station whose half-lit name is still obscure in this our ceaseless wonderland.

Muffled and stamping our feet, we stand, laughingly we

trap brother germ in our handkerchiefs or croak words of gaiety amid the fumes and pin-point fires of our cigarettes that are like so many glow-worms in the enchanted gloom.

Everywhere a sense of comradeship prevails. We are all here in London together gathered from the four parts of the earth; she has beckoned us, one and all, that kindly hostess, in this her gayest season, under her sooty but beloved wing. The stranger is welcome also. The United Nations are here. Thridding the mazy tunnels of her Underground, lost in her noonday night, or scampering through her complicated traffic, one and all pay tribute to the wiles of the sorceress. The Esquimaux jostles with the Argentine, the dweller on the far steppes with the dweller in the distant kraal, and what if the theatre and the cinema, when the labours of the day are ended, be only open at the hours when, faint with hunger and shivering with cold, we long for nothing save fireside and food. Capricious London! That is her elfin way. Evasive as the advertisements of goods you cannot buy that cover so much of the architecture that is not there, she wraps about her countenance her scarf of icy glamour, her snood of mist, her wimple of provocative disdain . . .

As for me, I think it would be better if you closed that little opening at the very top of the window. Thank you. Like that. There is more, much more, that I could say about the beauty of London on a morning of midwinter like this. But thank heaven I have influenza. It would not be well for me to take part in the varied joys of the Metropolis on a morn like this. Bid comrade doctor to my bedside with his shining stethoscope. Lay on another blanket or two. Give me a shawl and a hot drink, and let playmate throstle have a share of my crumbs. EVOE.

Le Uno et W.V.S.

JE parle du W.V.S., Madame Ystz.
Comment, madame?
Et bien, c'est une espèce d'organisation de femmes.
Oui.

Si.

Et bien, madame, je pense que since votre mari est tellement busy au Conference vous n'avez probablement pas beaucoup à faire.
Je me make myself claire?

Et bien, nous serons enchantées de vous rendre service, et si vous aimeriez, nous pouvons vous prendre quelquepart pour voir quelquechose.
Le national Gallery peut être, où Madame Tussaud's?
Où des jolies morceaux d'Angleterre?
Où le East End bombé pendant la guerre?
N'import où,
c'est up to you.

Et bien, c'est juste, madame, comme vous pensez. Nous avons beaucoup de femmes, comme moi, qui parlent français, et qui, comme vous, n'avaient rien du tout à faire.

Oui, c'est extraordinaire, mais je parle, vous voyez, du W.V.S., Madame Ystz.
V. G.



RED HERRINGS FOR SALE



"Salmon or pheasant?"

Beating the Controls

I DID not realize until afterwards that I had been trading in the Black Market. In these times of economic chaos it is so easy to stray over the shadowy frontier between honest greed and ruthless profiteering. "Don't let it go," my friends said, "for a penny under fifty pounds."

"But I only gave twenty for it," I said.

"Gave? What does it matter what you gave? My dear idiot . . ." They could hardly speak, they were so worked up about it. Millington described how his landlady's sister had been doing a house-to-house of Chiswick trying to buy one, with a handbag full of five-pound notes; and Pollett said I might have let him know before, as he had paid forty pounds for one

the previous Wednesday—with worn-out springs at that.

So I rang up Willow's and asked them if they would care to buy a divan-bed, in new condition. They were delighted. They sent a man round the same day to see it, and after agreeing that it was a very nice bed he offered me four pounds for it, including the mattress and folk-weave cover.

"But I was given to understand," I said, colouring slightly, "that a rather higher price—"

"It's the controls, see," said the man. "Now selling privately . . . advertising . . ." And he made a spacious gesture in the direction of the ceiling.

When I told my friends about this

they were surprised, but most of them said with a shrug, "Oh, well—dealers," and agreed that an advertisement was the thing.

It cost me twenty-five shillings, including the nasty little greedy word "Offers?" The offers were not quite what I had expected. One was in writing: "*Re advert please deliver bed to 13 West Preston Crescent, N.1, three £ weighting. N. Hitchborn (Mrs.).*" There were a number by telephone, ranging from four pounds ten to six pounds; and a middle-aged man called in person and prodded the bed a good deal with a sharp walking-stick before offering me thirty shillings for the mattress.

My friends were puzzled, and revealed to me that astonishing figures

were being given at auction sales for divan-beds. Burstall's cousin had picked one up for fifty pounds, with a tin trunk full of old felt hats thrown in, and was being insufferably cock-a-hoop about it, while a neighbour of Mumford's who sent a divan-bed to a sale had received a cheque for thirty-eight pounds and an invitation to send along as many more beds as he could lay his hands on.

When I rang up a reputable firm of auctioneers they were just as delighted as Willow's had been.

"What do you think it would fetch?" I asked, blushing hotly.

"How thick is the mattress?"

"Pretty thick," I said.

"No, no—in inches."

It was the controls again. It appeared that if a mattress was only four inches thick, with spiral springing, the controlled price was five pounds; six inches thick, and hebdomadal (or something) springing, and the bidder could rocket up to six pounds ten.

"But I was given to understand—"

"Just a minute," said the man—"I'm only talking about the mattress, see?"

"Oh, only the mattress."

"It's only the mattress that's controlled, not the bed. So what usually happens, people buy the mattress at the controlled price and then bid a very substantial figure for the bed to go with it."

"Good," I said, scarlet with rapaciousness. "Then perhaps you will kindly collect the bed and sell it for me?"

"Okay," said the man.

(I ought to say that I may not be reporting the technicalities of the affair with complete accuracy. I was nervous and embarrassed at the time. Perhaps it was the bed that was controlled—something to do with the length and number of its legs—and the mattress that was not; but it came to the same thing in the end because one was no good without the other, and the two together ought to fetch a very substantial figure.)

My friends thought I was being very wise to decide on this course. Anderson had heard of two ladies having been arrested for assaulting an auctioneer the day before; one of them had bid fifty-five guineas for a divan-bed, and the other one maintained that—well, I forget, exactly, but it all went to show that I was doing the right thing.

The auctioneers' cheque for three pounds was brought by hand.

There was a letter with it explaining that the mattress had been bought by

a bidder who had a divan but no mattress; and as there had been no bidder who had a mattress but no divan, the divan was returned "per bearer." I looked into the corridor, and there it was. The bearer who had borne the letter had another bearer with him, and between them they had borne the bed up the stairs. They had a lean and thirsty look.

Hastily I reviewed the situation. Incomings, three pounds; out-goings, ten shillings to the auctioneers for collecting the bed; ten shillings (no doubt) for bringing it back; twenty-five shillings for the advertisement . . .

And what was I to do with the bed? I didn't want it. I wasn't selling it to make money, like the people who offer a dozen golf-balls, original wrapping, twenty-eight pounds. I just wanted to be rid of the thing. Besides, I had filled up its vacated corner with partly-unpacked trunks.

"Would either of you like the bed?"

I said to the men.

They looked at me suspiciously and shook their heads.

"Free, I mean."

They propped the bed up against the corridor wall and waited.

"Supposing," I said, "I gave you seven-and-sixpence to take it away?"

They waited.

"Each," I said.

They took the money and shared it out on the spot. Then they took the bed and started dejectedly down the stairs, swearing to each other in undertones.

When I told my friends how the business had at last been concluded they were baffled. Rivers said that his aunt had been to a sale at Penge and had bought a two-foot-six divan for forty guineas; she was overjoyed, and talked of nothing else. And Fry's father-in-law had written to him saying that he would give twenty pounds and a 1935 Austin Seven for a divan-bed in any condition, and no questions asked.

Miss Cooling, of the Accounts Department, said, "What was the matter with it?"

"There was nothing the matter with it," I said stiffly.

"Then there must be something the matter with you," she said. "My friend Miss Tweedy, in Correspondence, was offered—"

"Never mind," I said.

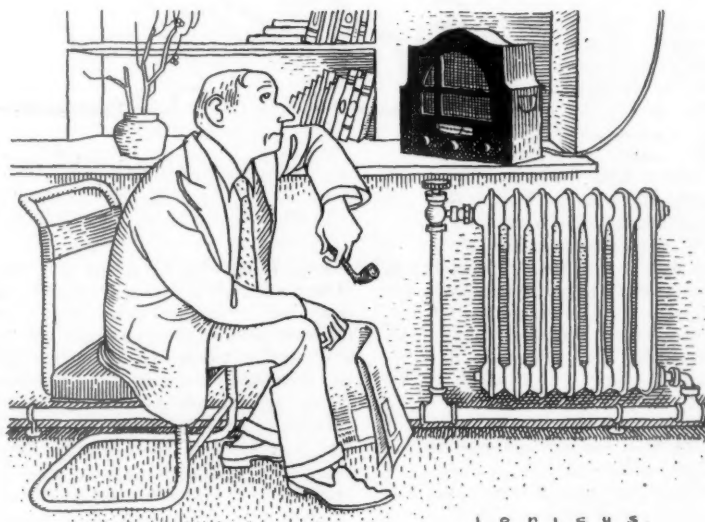
But I feel that Miss Cooling may be right. I did not realize until afterwards that I had been trading in the Black Market. When I did realize it I realized too that I was not cut out for it. I've learned my lesson. I'm not the type to take advantage of the economic chaos, and I shall go straight in future, even if it means making a fortune.

J. B. B.

A Bad Start

"According to the A.P., action will be designed to 'put teeth into' the German assets in Switzerland. United Nations' aim to seize all Sweden, Spain and Portugal."

Irish paper.



"... and here is 'Music for the Fireside'."

At the Pictures

FOR THE YOUNG

At the time of writing there seems nothing for it but to make some observations about two large Technicolor works that have been running in London for some weeks and in fact might have been mentioned on this page a fortnight ago. I am aware that this must sound a grudging sort of introduction, but the fact remains that if there were any really first-rate new films about these two would get only a few words from me.

All the same, *Anchors Aweigh* (Director: GEORGE SIDNEY) has remarkably good bits. As a whole, it is even more obviously aimed at the adolescent audience than are most "commercial" films; but discard all the stuff about the shy sailor being instructed in the art of picking up girls, and the young singer achieving her hope of an audition from JOSE ITURBI, and the peeps behind the scenes of film-making (the story is set in Hollywood) — discard all that and there is still something left for the grown-up spectator.

The piece is on the same lines as others in which Mr. ITURBI has appeared (*Thousands Cheer*, *Music for Millions*), and it was no doubt carefully constructed so as to incorporate as many as possible of the most successful effects from them. A commercially efficient method of manufacture, this cannot be expected to produce a work of art, and what I have called the "good bits" here are mostly in the nature of irrelevant embroideries; but they are worth seeing, and I think worth waiting for. The best is probably what may be called GENE KELLY's Spanish-dance scene. There is no real excuse for this in the story: Mr. KELLY is merely supposed to be describing to his beloved, in words, the romantically picturesque circumstances in which they might both be involved if — if it were "Old Spain," and she a lady on her balcony; but there on the screen, in no time, it is Old Spain, and

she is on the balcony, and Mr. KELLY is executing a flashingly brilliant dance in and out of the coloured shadows and over walls and roof-tops on his way to join her there. Another dance scene he does, with cartoon characters, is full of ingenuity but didn't appeal to me so much.

I say "Mr. KELLY" does all this, because such behaviour is hardly characteristic of the part of *Joseph*

ees not good"); and KATHRYN GRAYSON is the singing heroine, of whom a Brooklyn waitress at one point observes "She's a swell one, dat goil — and what a verse!"

An even younger age-group of moviegoers is likely to take pleasure in *The Bandit of Sherwood Forest* (Directors: GEORGE SHERMAN and HENRY LEVIN), which is another rehash of what is best

described as the old Robin Hood material. Robin Hood himself appears and takes a considerable part, mostly in an administrative capacity; for he is in hearty middle-age now and is generally known as the *Earl of Hun'ingdon*. "The Bandit" is his son (CORNEL WILDE), whom with great foresight he has "trained for just such a time as this" — a time when the Regent of England (HENRY DANIELL) is proposing to repudiate Magna Carta and kill the young King and one thing and another. Robin Hood has luckily kept up all his old contacts with the Underground movement, and helped by his celebrated Merry Men (every one of whom is still merry enough for six) he and his dashing son foil the Regent, and rescue the young King, and save the situation.

Apart from some twentieth-century boy-meets-girl stuff ("I didn't terribly mind," confesses the Queen's lady-in-waiting after being kissed by the Bandit), most of all this nonsense is calculated to delight a schoolboy audience. The rest of us may find some pleasure in the use of colour, in the sunlit greenery of the

forest (perfect weather throughout, of course — the good old days!) and in renewing our acquaintance with Hollywood's mediæval castle with its massive winding stairs and its drawbridge, its well-appointed council-chamber and its stout machicolated walls, its guards all over the place. (In these castle interiors there are some particularly interesting colour and shadow effects.)

There is also that dear old conspiratorial signal, "the hoot of the owl." I imagine that in conspiratorial districts the owl has by now forfeited all legal right to use its own hoot. R. M.



[Anchors Aweigh]

CARTOON KING RELAXES.

GENE KELLY

Brady which he plays in the main story: a love-'em-and-leave-'em sailor, described by his awed and shy friend Clarence (FRANK SINATRA) as "the best wolf in the whole Navy." But then the main story is an uneasy framework of misunderstandings which the adult spectator, as I have hinted, may do well to disregard, reserving his attention for the bright spots, and his gratitude for GENE KELLY's skill as a comedian no less than as a dancer. JOSE ITURBI is there to play the piano and dispense fatherly advice ("To throw away a friend in anger — dees

Guide to Civilian Life

The Barber

THE average barber's shop can always be recognized by the fact that it calls itself a "Gent's Hairdresser." The student should accustom himself to the fact that he is now politely regarded as "a gent," as opposed to a "bloke," "oppo" or "china."

It is possible that the barber may already be cutting someone else's hair. The student should in this case whistle under his breath and stare at the ceiling; and after a few moments he may take up the daily paper. He will not get the whole paper, but a small section will do. As soon as he is seated he ceases to be a "Gent" and is henceforth known as "Next."

An experienced "Next" is never flustered. He is calm and dignified. He knows that he should never approach the barber's chair unless specifically invited. It may be that the barber will take a few minutes off to regain his touch or that a more favoured customer will be advanced in his turn. A "Next" should never arbitrarily assume that he is next: upon being called he should look round at the other "Nexts" with an air of inquiry. Only upon receiving their clear assent may he advance to the chair.

Contact is now gained. After a few formalities, viz., "Trim?" "Clippers?" "Short at the back?" the barber commences work. In the opening stages the student should strive to leave his mind a blank. He will shortly discover with a hurried glance that a vile, unkempt, seedy person with the signs of excess in every line of his countenance is facing him. He should not worry unduly. This is the student's face, reflected in the mirror, and with a dash of philosophy he should realize that nothing can be done about it.

The barber, in any case, will come to the rescue by remarking "Getting a little thin on top." There is no answer to this and no attempt should be made to provide one. The conversation should be deftly turned to the weather, remembering that in England the climate is a topic which is fully weighed. Useful comparisons may be made with the monsoon in Burma, or the climate of Egypt, where of course the rainfall is negligible.

The next burning question is whether to have a shampoo. In most "Gent's Hairdressers" the eighth freedom is granted, i.e., that a man is free to wash his own hair. In some establishments



"This time I'd like some of that sort—I couldn't break the last lot with a hammer."

refusal of a shampoo involves loss of prestige.

The best way, in this case, of avoiding the shampoo is to look at the watch and draw in the breath sharply. This implies that you would like a shampoo, but have not the time. All the same there are many barbers who will say nastily "No shampoo?" so that all the "Nexts" can hear.

The agony is now almost over. Only one choice remains. Will the student have:

- (a) a little brilliantine?
- (b) just a spray?
- (c) the cream?

The result in each case is equally repugnant and unmanly, but barbers themselves prefer the spray, which they

discharge with devastating effect at the ears.

The culminating gesture is when the barber holds a mirror behind the student's head.

It is customary to think of some splendid word of praise—"Grand!" "Marvellous!" "Just what I wanted!" In any case it is too late to complain, and the old Service custom of telling the barber exactly what you think is definitely taboo.

Do not forget the tip on leaving, a smile to the girl at the counter, and your hat, which will seem rather large. If you possess a demob hat it is more than likely that the rack will contain a better one. Well, the student knows what he would have done in the Services—



"Hello, C.I.D.? I'm afraid there's been a spot of bother at the bank here. A couple of your chaps came along reconstructing our recent robbery without warning us beforehand."

Threnody in January

ALREADY, even in January
the beech
puts forth her thorn-like, tight-rolled soot-brown buds:
a muster of spears
which tip the end of each
out-thrusting twig
in the coldly desolate woods.

Rub one between your thumb and finger, like
a grain of oats when you would squeeze the "milk"
and lo!
the husk splits,
the protected spike
reveals its inner filaments of silk
pale, palest green,
thin as a dragon-fly's wing
and folded,
every miniature leaf,
guarding and holding the secrets of coming Spring,
whose leafing,
as her flowering,
is brief.

Spring, who will feel that she is young, is young,
and all the earth is hers;
who will toss her curls
and go her wilful way
to have her fling
soon to grow old—
like other golden girls.

R. C. S.

My Lifetime in Basic Industry

XI—The Chroniclers of Scowle

ABOUT ten years ago, when Scowle once again became a Mecca for industrial novelists, the local council issued a guide-book to the district. I have a copy before me as I write this penultimate chapter of my reminiscences, and it is a veritable mine of information. On the inside cover there is a map showing the position of Scowle in relation to London, New York, Cape Town and Moscow, and the probable and possible extent of the coal reserves. Danger spots such as disused pit-shafts, areas of chronic subsidence and the Women's Institute are marked by brown patches; crossed swords indicate the location of historic events. There is one on Barlow's Pike, where Charles Dickens is supposed to have sat while writing *Hard Times*, another alongside the football ground, where Simeon Maw began and abandoned his attempt to construct an open-air swimming-pool, and another on the spot where Ben Pilcher had his vision of Home Rule. And so on.

Then comes a statistical table showing wet- and dry-bulb barometer-readings between 1880 and 1910 compiled by my grandfather Ebby and reproduced by kind permission of the proprietors of the *Ashbridge Evening Star*. "Popular Walks in the Scowle District" comes next—the following are extracts:

1. Take the pathway leading from the Mission Hall and round the back of the Women's Institute until you reach what looks like a disused pit-shaft but which, since 1928 (by order of the local council), has been known as the wishing-well. Take a stone, drop it down the well and listen. If your stone plops into the water your wish should come true. If you hear a muffled scream or an oath you have probably got the wrong shaft. Return as quickly as possible by way of Congreve's Folly and the lime-pits.
2. Follow the transverse fault running under Turner's Emporium until it brings you to the Scowle Arms (early closing day, Thursday). Then follow the crowd to The Half-Nelson. Return via the Scowle Arms.
3. Take the lane leading from the gas-holder through Mr. Branson's poultry-farm (market-day, Wednesday) until you come to the derelict canal. Climb the further bank and push on up the scarp face of Barlow's Pike. Carve your initials on the meteorite on the summit and return by way of Leeds or Manchester.

The reader may be surprised to learn that Scowle is the original of the Coketown of *Hard Times*, for at least a score of northern towns have claimed that distinction, and the author himself certainly gave no hint that he had Scowle in mind. Still, there it is. In the wordy battle of the 'eighties Scowle had the last word in the correspondence columns of the *Northern Gazette* and assumed the title.



"Now, Albert, we'll see if after five years the old hand has lost its cunning."

And to this day in the market-place of Scowle there stands a magnificent statue with the inscription:

Chas. Dickens, who was immortalized by Scowle in the novel *Hard Times*. Carved out of Dribben Coal by Emmanuel Uskub. Dribben Coal for coking and all industrial purposes—delivered free within twenty-mile radius.

But Scowle does not live on its past glories. Even in my time, forty-odd years ago, it was fully realized that trade follows the novelist. To keep abreast of the literary scene Scowle made itself as attractive as possible to the realist school of writers, kept them supplied with plots and local colour, and entertained them very lavishly. And there was never any friction between Scowle and its visitors unless the two inns ran dry.

Almost every summer a batch of invitations would be sent off to a selected and seeded list of writers. It would read something like this:

We are holding a little strike during the first week in July when we should be grateful for the pleasure of your company. A full programme of attractions, incidents, etc., has been arranged.

R. S. V. P.

A special bureau was set up to cater for the novelists, and a curfew kept the child population indoors every day between nine A.M. and twelve noon so that their labours should not be disturbed. The greatest care was taken to ensure that no inaccuracies crept into the writings, and throughout July and August a special committee of censors sat to consider the work submitted. The committee would not approve more than a few rows of asterisks in any one novel, or allow a writer to tamper with the local dialect. And they insisted that each completed work should be prefaced with the statement "The characters portrayed in this book wish it to be known that they are entirely fictitious."

Most of the novelists were helpful and co-operative, but others objected bitterly to the work of the Orange No. 2 Pit. They protested that they could capture the atmosphere of the coal-face without prolonged experience of it, and imagined that a single visit would be enough. But the village thought otherwise and insisted on a full week's work being done by all. To add verisimilitude to the performance the strike pickets had instructions to let the novelists through to the pits only after a slight struggle.

And when the afternoon shift came to an end and the novelists came out by they were shepherded into the schoolroom where they served as guinea-pigs for the domestic science class and had their backs flannelled.

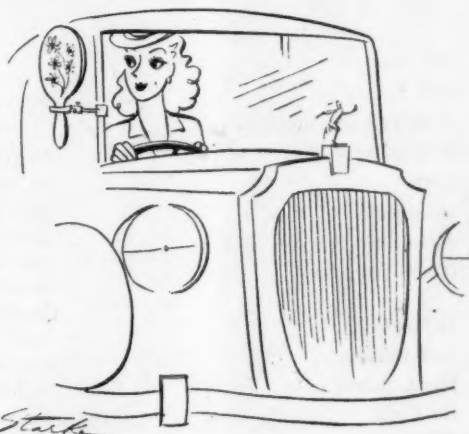
In view of all this care and attention to detail it is not really surprising that Scowle has so many best-sellers to its credit. Do you remember *Going Down!* by Mason Gutteridge, *Valley of Disaster*, by Eugene R. Taffety, *They Call It Coal*, by F. Ridgworth Peek, and *The Cage*, by Irwin Midge? There are scores of others.

I often wonder what Dickens would make of Scowle to-day with its gleaming pit-head baths, its automatic canteens, the neat rows of more or less permanent cottages, the extra-mural classes of Redbrick, the fine arterial road and the super-cinema. No doubt he would still find plenty of targets for his fearless pen, for though Scowle has changed it is still proud of its literary tradition and retains, I believe, its information bureau. I shall certainly back Scowle to be the venue of the first post-war industrial novel.

Hod.

"The cold spell is, as much as anything, due to those nearly-record readings the barometer has been giving during the past month, while it has had 'the jumps'."—*Daily paper*.

Incredible what those little barometers can do, isn't it?





"The next question comes from Philo of Syracuse: 'We are told that any two sides of a triangle are together greater than the third. Is this true?'"

Feeding Difficulties

FOR some time
I searched
for a pudding-bowl
about 3 inches deep,
and diameter
at the open end
exactly $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches.

I found one
and bought it.
It solved the problem . . .
how to keep
Cork
the spaniel's
ears
out of the gravy.

It worked,
and works,
like a charm
for Cork.

But Cork
recently
fathered a son,
and we graduated James
to the same pudding bowl
at the age of five months.

We should have waited
till his face had grown
a little broader.
He managed
somehow
to get his ears in,
as well as his nose;
and,
grabbing at everything
that tasted good,
he bit
his left ear
hard,
and howled his pain
and fury
for many minutes.

Now
he won't eat out of anything
until his ears
have been tucked back
into his collar.

This is a bore,
and more work for me.
But
it has stopped him
scavenging
in dust-bins.

On the other hand
it worries me
that he may stray
sometime,
and starve to death,
because the police,
or whoever found him,
would never discover
what
James was waiting for
before eating.



PAS DE DEUX

"I wonder what sort of figure we old people are going to cut."

Impressions of Parliament

Business Done:

Tuesday, January 22nd.—House of Commons: After the Hols.

Wednesday, January 23rd.—House of Lords: Intermission and Chorus.

House of Commons: Foreign Affairs.

Thursday, January 24th.—House of Commons: Winged Words on Airways.

Tuesday, January 22nd.—There is one thing about House of Commons jokes: even if they often puzzle the casual observer, they are topical. And a joke that "goes over" gets a laugh that would bring tears of envy to the eyes of the most "collarsal" radio comedian.

Take, for instance, the case of Mr. PETER FREEMAN, when Parliament reassembled to-day. It so happened that at midnight the Soviet and Ukrainian Governments had made formal complaint to the United Nations Organization that Britain was interfering in the internal affairs of Greece and Indonesia. And, just before, the Persian Government had complained that the Soviet Government was doing the same thing in Azerbaijan. So when Parliament reassembled this topic was uppermost in most minds.

Question-time wandered on an unexciting course, and eventually there came the familiar one about the need for a Secretary of State for Wales. Mr. ATTLEE had nothing to say on the subject. But Mr. FREEMAN had. Rising with great gravity and fixing the Prime Minister with a stern and admonitory gaze, he strongly advised the Government to settle this matter with speed, lest it be referred to the United Nations for investigation and decision.

This brought the House down, and Mr. ATTLEE was cheer-leader.

But, taken as a whole, there was little of the festive spirit about to-day's reassembly after a month's recess. Perhaps it was the weather—for there was fog and frost outside. Perhaps it was the diplomatic weather which surrounded the meetings of the United Nations Assembly across the road at Westminster Central Hall, which seemed also to be frosty and foggy. Whatever the cause, there was a serious air about the Commons, and there was positive depression when Mr. EDWARD WILLIAMS, the Minister of Information, announced that at "a

fairly early date" radio licences are to cost £1, instead of 10s., a year. He explained that the radio service had to return to a self-supporting basis, and that this was the only way to do it.

Sighing gently, the House let it pass, and moved on to discuss the setting up of courts to fix fair rents for furnished houses, flats and rooms.

Several Members seemed to feel that the cookery-book rule of "first catch your furnished flat" applied, but Mr. ANEURIN BEVAN, the Minister of Health (who, in spite of his refusal to fix a housing "target" wears the confident air of one who knows he will

was in action to-day, fresh (as theatrical announcements put it) from recent successes in the inner councils of the United Nations.

He was at his most brisk—which is very brisk indeed. When Major WILKES had demanded that we follow the lead of countries like Holland and Norway and break off relations with the Spanish Government, he rapped back that he did not intend to engage in "diversionary tactics of any kind." But he made it plain that he did not like General Franco's Government, adding only that it was for the Spanish people to make a change.

A little later, Mr. TOM DRIBERG asked a question about the landing of Dutch reinforcements in Indonesia, saying it was a very different thing from keeping British troops there. Mr. BEVIN seemed to misunderstand the object of the question and was very rough with Mr. DRIBERG. However, it all made for brightness, which was very welcome in a none-too-bright question-hour.

Their Lordships were considerably occupied with a speech from Lord BEAVERBROOK on his favourite topics of agriculture and the Anglo-American loan.

With a dramatic sweep of his arms Lord BEAVERBROOK proclaimed his conviction that there was a gloomy outlook for the British agricultural industry if the American loan went through.

Everybody thought Lord ADDISON, who was to reply for the Government, seemed deeply moved (as the saying is), for he kept passing his hand across his eyes and mouth. But it may not have been emotion after all.

In fact it probably was not, for when he came to reply, Lord ADDISON mentioned quite jovially that Lord B. was "wrong from start to finish." He also described the gloom-study drawn by the noble lord opposite as a "fancy picture of a dairy-maid."

Thursday, January 24th.—Lord BEAVERBROOK was in the news again to-day—this time in the Commons. The business was the debate on civil flying; but the oratory attained no very striking altitude records.

It fell, however, to Mr. HERBERT MORRISON, fresh back from Canada and the U.S.A., to wind up for the Government, and he livened up the proceedings quite a bit. Not that what he had to say had much to do with flying—except perhaps flights of fancy.



THE DIAGNOSIS

In the debate on the Bank of England Bill, Lord Calverley said that Lord Swinton had got the jitters.

certainly blow the centre of the bull out) smiled happily.

There was one item of news during the day that gave pleasure to all—the Minister of Labour's announcement that demobilization from the Forces was up to schedule, in spite of the worst efforts of the elements to upset it. In fact 1,700 more men than had been bargained for were already out—making a total of 1,511,800. As though to give the mere civilians a look-in, Mr. ISAACS added that he was planning to release 5,000 railwaymen, in the hope of making our railways a little more comfortable. Members from the Far North, East and West cheered this announcement with feeling.

Wednesday, January 23rd.—Mr. ERNEST BEVIN, the Foreign Secretary,



"It's from the Air Force, dear. They've returned our saucepans."

Topsy Turvy

XVI

TRIX darling, *such* news what do you think *both* the twins may be out by *Christmas*, I've had the longest letters, by the way darling have you the faintest notion what a *Flag* lieutenant does, personally because they all call him *Flags* I thought our Jack would be in charge of *signalling*, well I know when they talk about *Pills* that's the *Doctor*, and *Guns* is the Gunnery King, and *Sparks* is the Wireless, so what would you think, although of course I ought to have known that *pure* logic like I *always* use is quite misleading and *redundant* in the Navy, because when they talk about *Number 1* they don't mean the *Captain* like I and you would, they mean *Number 2* or perhaps not *that*, anyhow I forget if I told you Jack was *torn off* his beloved destroyer in the East and ordered to be this *Flags* in Australia, which from all I hear means a sort of *Mother* to an Admiral, who is it sounds the most lovable category, in Charm-and-merit group undeniably *One*, because Haddock met him at that *Mulberry* place, well Jack we gather has to nurse him through *parties*, the poor Admiral it seems being far from a *party-type* and creeps into corners whenever possible, *too* moving, Jack I suppose has to goad and *mobilize* him again into social combat, *what* wouldn't I give to see it, wouldn't you, anyhow he's having the *most* fruity experience and one gathers a congenial time, though *rather* yearning of course to be back on his little *bridge*, but my dear the Australians have been *too* wide-hearted and wondrous to *all* the Navy *manifestly*, bless them, and if he doesn't come home with at least *one* Australian bride, which Haddock says he might *well* have done himself but of course for rather a *Topsy* priority, and of course *all* this is the *most* phenomenal coincidence because my dear I was *too* affected by what you said about your young and ours, and numerous salvos for the new *photos*, of course it would make me *mediaevally* happy to have a four-square wedding, your *Fidelity* and Jack, your *Phil* and Jill, my dear it sounds like a *nursery* rhyme, *too* touching, but how could you give that poor child a name like *Fidelity*, my dear *Punctuality* I could understand, *Tenacity*, *Veracity*, or even *Fertility*, but *Fidelity*, what a *bunker* to put on the green, my dear it's like labelling a hotel *Temperance*, when of course the *niciest* gentlemen

will keep away *even* if they've no *desire* to drink, and of course *what* will happen when the poor child's *married* and her spouse perhaps is on the *China* Station, *nothing* in trousers will venture *near* her, because can you imagine any *nice* man *telecommunicating* to a grass-widow and saying *Fidelity* dear come out for a dine and dance, you might *just* as well have christened her *Nun* or *Goldfish*, and perhaps of course that was you and Henry's *plan*, however darling *don't* let us go into all that *now*, honestly I never meant to say a *word* about it, and of course I must tell you that Haddock is *absolutely* with us, I mean about the tribal *nuptials*, the only thing is I *do* think we don't want to *rush* things don't you agree my dear, because after all what *do* we know about the Young, honestly my dear in these days I find the Young are *so* inscrutable that I sometimes feel by the time we *understand* them they'll be practically *middle-aged*, and I *do* think there *may* be such a thing as incompatible *what* is the word, I *know* you'll understand darling, and then of course there's *environment* and everything, I mean just because you and I were *bosoms* at the old academy and *since* one mustn't be *too* sure about the next litter *must* we, pardon the metaphor my dear, as you know I'm rather *dog-minded* these days, by the way *last* Wednesday was a *pattern* of calamity, only *one* of my selecteds won and then it was a *foul* or something, *too* deflating *all* the little winnings went and I *do* so ache to finance the Haddock holiday, however as I was saying, well Jill for example, Jill and your Phil, my dear I can see at once he's the *grandest* boy, and *how* they've both filled out at *Medicine* *Hat*, or was it *Moose Jaw*, I suppose you *couldn't* have done anything about those front tusks darling, Jack had *much* the same formation at school but suffered *plates* for centuries, and *now* as you'll see, *too* sorry it's only a snap my dear and *not* in uniform, the *second* girl from the right we gather is a *rather* aromatic Wren Second Officer, no tooth-trouble *there* by the way, however what are *teeth* it's the *temperament*, isn't it, and *that* in passing is the word that baffled me *before*, well of course it *shines* out that your Phil is going to be a *country-boy*, which in theory I'm *utterly* for, my dear you know *whatever* I say I'm

never so happy as *knee-deep* in mud or sneezing in the new-mown *hay*, Jill by the way my dear is a hay-feverite *too*, they say it's hereditary from Haddock's *great-uncle* who was the *first* Bishop of *Sudonesia*, which is some *leprous* segment of the *South Pacific*, of course I can see your large Philip *striding* through the spinneys with a gun like *Henry*, and it's *too* true that our little Jill has rustic trends *likewise* because for the first year and a *half* of the conflict she was *officially* a *Land* *Woman*, and they say she has the *most* magical touch with *cows*, for one thing in the *dank* and insanitary dawn she used to recite *pet* pieces from Haddock's *poems* to the cows, with it seems the *most* noticeable effect upon the *milk*, one time I *think* she said she got a prize for *octane* content, or is that *petrol*, it's all so *confusing* these days, anyhow that is our *Jill*, I mean with *any* animal she's like the *Pied Piper*, you can't walk down the *street* with her without a *platoon* of cats behind you, *too* embarrassing of course but *moving*, give her a moribund *sea-gull* or a half-drowned fish and she'll spend *days* with a brandy-bottle and *hot* wool *resuscitating* same, my dear what a *word*, and as for *dogs* they merely *swoon* at the sight of her and *lie* down in front of buses with all four *paws* aloft, actually my dear if you let her loose in one of your *fox-fields* I think it's *too* likely you'd find the fox and *all* the dogs in a voluptuous huddle on her *lap*, with *all* the horses queueing up for *sugar*, so at first sight you *might* say, I *couldn't* disagree with you *less*, that here you have two environmental *fits* or twin-souls, on the *other* hand one *has* to recognize, and I know my dear you won't for a *moment* suspect me of would-be *woundings*, the *one* thing the dear girl *never* does with her animals is to *shoot* them, and although of course *like* me she can wolf a roast bird *hot* or cold with *ill-concealed* relish, there it is I'm *too* afraid that if on the *first* day he takes her for a *spinney-stroll* with a gun and comes back with a bleeding *otter* or mutilated quail the tender child will give *three* screams and scurry back to *mother*, besides which she's *immersed* in music and could *not* I think live through a winter in the North without *hungering* for the *Albert Hall*, *don't* think I'm making difficulties darling, but it is just as well to face *realities*, as the burglar said to the bishop in the bath, of course



"How's business—normal, ab or sub?"

you *may* say that Phil could get a job and settle in the *capital*, but *that's* a sacrifice if it was me I wouldn't *hear* of, my dear one thing a girl must *never* do and that is to stand between a hubby and a *hobby*, if you'll forgive that *pestilent* word, hubby I mean, no darling I'm *too* sure your Phil *must* stick to his beaver-shooting and everything, and the estate-agent job you mention sounds like *Nature's* niche for him, then of course there's the *age* conundrum, I don't know about your Fertility, but Jill will scarcely *notice* a man under *about* 43, I suppose it *is* true that the boys are backward especially the Brigadiers and Wing-Captains, bless them, anyhow *don't* let's worry or rush for an *instant*, the *moment* they're all present we'll have

a *mass-rally*, give the little things their heads, and *philosophically* behold the outcome, but it *would* be magical I *do* agree, farewell Mrs. England, the *nation's* matron Topsy. A. P. H.

o o

Sonnet

To a Cockney Rhymster, Convicted

DEAR friend and brother pen, I
surely mawn
That you should still be
feeling bruised and saw;
Compunction sometimes wakes me up
at dorn,
What hour the matutinal cocks do
crore.

I feel I must have hit you on the rore,
Have stamped on your most valuable
cawn;

Take back again the curses that you
swaw,
Lest they, like toadstools, should begin
to sporn.

Beware! faw curses have their after-
marth,
And haply the ill-wisher takes a
torse;

His maledictions home to their own
hahth,

Where he sits gnorn and writhen
with remause.

You can't hit back, although I think
I've scawed,
You're stuck in England, and I'm
going abrord!

At the Play

"DEATH OF A RAT"
(LYRIC, HAMMERSMITH)

THE coughing season being now at its height, it is sometimes difficult to decide what a new play is about when the new play itself is not quite sure. Around me on this occasion I had as fine a bronchial orchestra as I can remember, all good, keen broken-winded amateurs, and they put up a magnificent show. In consequence many of Mr. JAN DE HARTOG's lines suffered severely, but I heard enough to feel regretfully he had failed in an honest attempt to give us something more sustaining than the current boards usually provide. His play is not without distinct merit, and I would much rather see it than one of the little drawing-room sinfuis guaranteed to run three years with one winding, but it loses impetus, after working up into quite a dramatic situation, in a strange whirl of rarefied thinking. It is acted in a way which gives it every chance and lends it greater plausibility than, on reflection, it deserved.

The scene is Amsterdam in February 1940, and there are only four characters. A research doctor, *Wiltis* (Mr. ROBERT HARRIS), takes home a sick girl to the house he shares with his chief, *Wouterson* (Mr. ALASTAIR SIM). *Yolan* (Miss PAMELA BROWN) is far gone with T.B., and X-rays show it to be extraordinary that she is still alive. All that is holding her to earth is a strong spiritual bond, rightly diagnosed by *Wouterson* as love for *Wiltis*, who loves her. She is herself a scientist, and with her help the two doctors try to arrive at an analysis of how death is being held off. Among her symptoms are prophetic visions in which she foresees that she will die after a kiss and that *Wiltis's* death will result from the ringing of a telephone bell.

The action switches between a laboratory, where after *Yolan's* death *Wiltis* is telling his story to his assistant (Mr. TERRY MORGAN), and the sitting-room in *Wouterson's* house. It is in the latter, in the big scene just before

Yolan dies, that the play, having shown increasing signs of instability, leaves the rails. This is the author's last chance to explain his theme and we are still in a mood to listen, but instead of light we are given a curious summing-up by *Yolan* in which, speaking as one with inside information, she predicts a dreary future for mankind, atomic destruction of the world to be followed by an uncomfortable resurgence from the basic ooze. Reincarnation goes with it, and these and other theories she ties up with

In spite of the evident confusion of thought there is much better stuff here than there was in Mr. DE HARTOG's *Skipper Next to God*, more flexible dialogue and a deeper appreciation of character. There is also humour. Miss BROWN plays her long and taxing part with great discretion and gives *Yolan* objective force without robbing her of sympathy. It is a fine performance. Mr. HARRIS is admirably cast as the tormented young doctor and, given an eccentric professor cloaking passionate realism with irresponsibility, Mr. SIM is, needless to say, in his element. ERIC.

"THE CHERRY ORCHARD"
(CAMBRIDGE THEATRE
GROUP—A.D.C.)

This delightful but nevertheless supremely preposterous piece was very fairly rendered by a cast in which the honours seemed equally divided between town and gown. The authentic Marxian quality which runs through it (I am not attempting to pre-date the Revolution, but am referring to the later and, as I shall always think, funnier philosophers of that name) was well brought out, and Mr. DONALD BEVES, the producer, was happy in the groupings and attitudes which are of such special importance in a play in which so little happens and so much is obliquely implied, and in which probably the only person having no pretension to being corroded by the psychic acids of Russian country life is the *Station-master*, whose grievance might have been expected

to have run the deepest, since his trains, in the inviolable tradition of Russian literature, arrived in the middle of the night.

This was a lively production, helped by several colourful sets by GEMINI, the paint-brush name of two young artists who seem to have ideas. Miss CAMILLE PRIOR made a gracious feudal butterfly as *Mme. Ranevsky*, and Mr. S. C. ROBERTS, miraculously transformed by a Holmes overcoat and a nonconformist moustache into the L. G. of the National Insurance Act epoch, was an eloquent and amusing *Gaev*, the wordy cannoner off the cushion. The large cast gave good support. ERIC.



SPIRITUAL FORCE v. MEDICAL KNOWLEDGE

<i>Wouterson</i>	MR. ALASTAIR SIM
<i>Yolan</i>	MISS PAMELA BROWN
<i>Wiltis</i>	MR. ROBERT HARRIS

some brave-sounding stellar calculations. That is all very well, but she is supposed to be a scientist, talking to another scientist, and this is neither science nor good theatre; what it sounds like is an appendix to *The Mysterious Universe* as edited by Mrs. Annie Besant. Soon afterwards, to keep from her the knowledge that the new drug on which he and *Wouterson* had pinned their hopes has failed to save the experimental rat, *Wiltis* kisses her and the first of her predictions comes true. The play ends in the laboratory, where *Wiltis* has cut himself when a telephone startles him during an operation on an infected animal.

Terminology and Termites

YOU do know, don't you, that we are living in a revolution? Yes, it *has* happened here. The mill-stones are revolving and grinding exceeding small. If you doubt this read the third chapter of Schumpeter's *Outlay—Now!* or take a long look at your income-tax accounts. Whatever the political party in power during the next few decades it will make no difference to the startling fact that we are moving resolutely to an equalitarian distribution of the national income and capital. And we have already moved quite a long way towards what must, I suppose, be considered our objective.

Now the odd thing about this revolution is that it seems to have escaped the notice of the writers of non-fiction—that is, the economists. They are perorating as though Great Britain were still the two nations of Disraeli's *Sybil*; they still think in terms of "rich and poor," though at times they resort to such clever euphemisms as "the upper income-group" and "the lower income-group." They are sadly out of date, these wishful thinkers.

Now this grave weakness in terminology must be accounted responsible, I think, for the fact that so much of modern professional thought is barren and evasive. Can anything be done about it? Can we draft a

DICTIONARY OF SOCIAL GROUPINGS BASED ON REVISED NET-INCOME- SCALES?

To begin we must declare obsolete such obvious anachronisms as *rich*, *wealthy*, *opulent* and *affluent*, except for use in historical romances. We can liquidate *hoi-polloi*, *rabble*, *masses* (toiling or unthinking), *workers*, *proletariat* and *bourgeoisie*. Let us abandon too those loathsome groups the *well-to-do* and the *richer* and *poorer*. We can drop overboard such items as *employers*, *employees*, *capitalists*, *rentiers* and *entrepreneurs*—and I need not remind you why.

What is left? Just a few precious terms that have no hangover of unpleasant associations from the old regime, only a few words that look and sound like 1946 and all that. These are:

smiths	wrights
artisans	artificers
mechanics	shop stewards
others gainfully employed	
others gainfully unemployed	



"She was wantin' to speak to you, but I explained!"

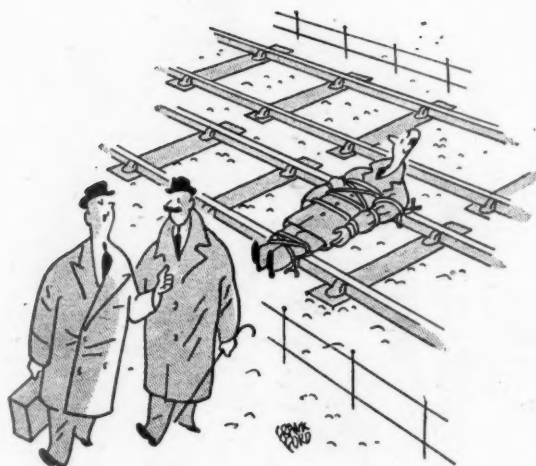
Everybody, whatever his occupation, can be forced or directed into one of these compartments. For example, the *artificer* group comprises professional taxpayers like schoolmasters, doctors, solicitors and writers, while P.A.Y.E. amateurs are included under *artisan*. In the *shop-steward* class we have former captains and vice-captains of industry, ex-kingpins of finance, retired managing directors and the regiment of women. And so on.

The average net earnings throughout these groups is about £4 10s. per week per family, with a mean deviation of

3d. or 3½d. perhaps. Just wait until next autumn when family allowances begin—then we'll have this subversive deviation down to about 2d.

Well, there you are. It looks fairly sound to me. Remember that we're all in the same ship of state or boat together, and that anything helping to promote efficiency among economists helps to reduce our overheads. There's just one point, however, where I would like a spot of help. Would you put strikers in the *artisan* group? Or among those *gainfully unemployed*?

HOD.



"I always say there's SOMEBODY worse off than yourself
—now take that chap we saw on the line just now."

Our Booking-Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

Europe Out of Bounds

MUCH may be learnt from *Between Tears and Laughter* (CRISP, 10/6), though not, alas, so much as Mr. LIN YUTANG supposes. His purpose is to play prompter to a sorry world-performance whose stars have forgotten their lines and whose supers their places. This is a large undertaking and there is no discredit in having bungled it. What one well-meaning, intelligent Chinese journalist, obviously in rather a hurry, can do to prove that Europe, and, to a lesser extent, America and Asia, need moral regeneration has been, in outline, well done. Over detail, the writer is less happy. His Carlylesque indictment of "swine and swill" progress is admirable; and his chapter on Western "standards of living" as (1) no use to Asia, (2) never worth raising anywhere at the price of class hatred, collectivism and loss of personal freedom, is the best thing in the book. His excursion into power-politics, with its rather fulsome approach to America and pettish antipathy to Britain, is unhelpful. It should be possible to argue that Empires are a mistake, and that Europeans are only tolerable in Europe, without equating India under England with France under Hitler.

H. P. E.

Journal of a Shipwreck

Adventure, recorded at the time, lacks the glamour in which it is invested by novelists. Only Defoe has been able to give to an imaginary narrative the matter-of-fact, sometimes tedious and repetitive, but in flashes intensely exciting atmosphere which envelops any really truthful account of actual occurrences, and the reader of *Jonathan Dickinson's Journal* (edited by EVANGELINE WALKER ANDREWS and CHARLES McLEAN ANDREWS; HUMPHREY MILFORD: OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS, 20/-) will often be reminded of Defoe. With twenty-five companions Dickinson, a Quaker merchant of Jamaica, was wrecked off

Jamaica Island, Florida, in September, 1696. They were at once set upon by the native Indians; and the most thrilling moment in the narrative is when the Indians, each with an upraised knife, stood behind their prospective victims, and "on a sudden it pleased the Lord to work wonderfully for our preservation, and instantly all these savage men were struck dumb, and like men amazed the space of a quarter of an hour, in which time their countenances fell, and they looked like another people." It was the calm demeanour of the captives which saved them. Several of them, including Dickinson and Robert Barrow, an aged Quaker missionary, were deeply religious, and their resignation to the will of an overruling Providence communicated itself to the others. But the party owed its ultimate survival to the knowledge of Spanish possessed by one of them, who persuaded their captors that they were Spaniards, not English, and must therefore be treated with respect.

H. K.

Success Story

Rose Timson (COLLINS, 10/6) is a study of an ambitious woman clawing her way ruthlessly to material independence; though Rose in the beginning is left stranded by a drunken husband and is spurred on by fanatical devotion to her two daughters, acquisitiveness soon takes the place of need. Having learned massage she labours so tirelessly at the flabby haunches of the hypochondriacal rich that she is able to discard her profitable hobby of shop-lifting; and when a dying French doctor, attracted by her unusual hands in a bar in St. Jean de Luz (and doubtless unaware that she is under the impression, see page 50, that Chateaufort du Pape is a claret), passes on to her a mysterious technique, she is shortly rolling in money. The nature of this legacy is not disclosed until the end when her younger daughter gets into trouble and she is faced with the temptation of using her own illegal skill to help her. Rose is an odd character, cold-blooded and almost without moral sense, yet she has directness and the kind of generosity which often springs from immense animal energy. Her relations with her elder daughter, whom she is tragically unfitted to understand, are a main strand in the theme, and here Miss MARGUERITE STEEN is at her best, for Kathleen's difficulties are portrayed with uncommon sympathy. The early chapters in Rose's struggle, with their vivid incidental impressions of her family, are also very well done; it is the later, richer, more glutted Rose whose story takes on a certain artificiality and whose edges become correspondingly blurred. Interesting though it is, this novel is not out of Miss STEEN's top drawer. Of the minor characters, Flora, blowsy proprietress of the Debreth Hotel, is terrific, but surely that particular ground was covered once and for all by Mr. Evelyn Waugh in *Lottie*, in *Vile Bodies*?

E. O. D. K.

Wild Life in London

Of the first two titles to be issued in the startlingly well-produced and attractive "New Naturalist" series, Mr. R. S. R. FITTER's *London's Natural History* (COLLINS, 16/-) is obviously more likely to have a popular success than the more specialized, though intensely interesting, *Butterflies*. It is a volume of pre-war magnificence, stuffed with admirable photographs, fifty-two of them in colour, and with a lively although learned text, dealing straightforwardly from every point of view with its subject: the wild life of the Greater London area, from the city cockroach to the red deer in Richmond Park, from the rose-bay willow-herb of the bombed sites to the Ken Wood beeches. Mr. FITTER begins with geological history from before the Ice Age ("once a tongue of ice came as far as Finchley"),

and goes on to give due consideration to all the influences—building, trade, excavation, smoke and so on—that have at various times contributed to the spread, or the diminution, or the changed habits of a particular form of life. In a short notice it is impossible even to list all the treasures in this fascinating book; but as early as page 2 of the Introduction you will come upon a remark that neatly concentrates its characteristic flavour: "... the black-headed gull is developing a habitat-preference for railway sidings in the London area."

R. M.

Controversy and a Question

Mr. COLM BROGAN's *Who Are the People?* a brilliant manifesto against Left-wing intellectualism, was somewhat bleak in tone. It dealt with human nature in the abstract, and seemed to have only a theoretical connection with life as it is experienced by the general run of mankind. *The Democrat at the Supper Table* (HOLLIS AND CARTER, 8/6) gives Mr. BROGAN a chance to show that, in spite of his passionate addiction to controversy, he has a feeling heart and is aware that among the sufferings of the ordinary man not the least is the difficulty, in these days the virtual impossibility, of getting out of earshot of the controversies for which his sufferings provide the raw material. The central figure of his book, the Democrat of the title, is a tireless expounder of Right-wing democracy, and his restless and rebellious audience are the other guests in a private hotel. He begins talking after supper on the first page, and his last words, at the bottom of the last page, are "Madam, I said in a threatening voice, 'do you really want me to start all over again?'" This question is addressed to the proprietress, who, after listening to the Democrat, to a business man, to a progressive schoolmaster, to a Communist, a modern poet, and an Indian Nationalist, delivers a protest which no doubt represents Mr. BROGAN's own deepest feeling—"When are people going to stop being good proletarians or capitalists or Indians or Socialists, and start being good people?"

H. K.

"Nothing Without Work"

Soundly insisting that only common action can save Western Europe, Mr. CHARLES WILSON has contributed to the mutual understanding of *Holland and Britain* (COLLINS, 8/6) a remarkably well-informed and well-illustrated account of our historical relations. These, alas, have never been enthusiastically cordial. Enthusiasm is not part of the Dutch make-up; and even the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries (which cemented the interests subsequently broken by a disparate exchange) found the "pickled heeren," as Marvell called them, respected rather than loved. But the greatness of our debt to Dutch civilization emerges here with multilateral impressiveness. It emerges not only in our drained fens, our crow-stepped East Anglian gables, our Van Dycks and Lelys, our Batavian cabbage-roses and our blotchy Friesian cows with their gallons of watery milk. It is less visibly and more subtly expressed in theology derived from Erasmus, a law of nations inherited from Grotius and in the technique of finance and international trade first worked out for the commercial world by the Dutch. How much of their rather pedestrian approach can be accommodated to our urgent problems is debatable. But the power behind it—an insatiable relish for honest work—is surely deserving of renaissance? Not for nothing did Charles I's engineer, the heroic Vermuyden, carve over his Cambridgeshire door "*Niet Zonder Arbeit*."

H. P. E.

Ballerina

The name of Alexandra Danilova conjures up brilliant memories of the Diaghileff Ballet, for she became Diaghileff's last ballerina two years before his death, in succession to Vera Nemchinova. She was brought up in the great (and exacting) tradition of the Imperial Theatre School of St. Petersburg, and in the impressionable days of her childhood had as examples ever before her such great dancers as her idol Karsavina, Preobrazhenskaya the Tsar's favourite, and Pavlova. Miss A. E. TWYSDEN's book, *Alexandra Danilova* (BEAUMONT, 21/-), is a vivid and entertaining story of the dancer's life. She gained a place in the Imperial Theatre School at the age of eight and was outstanding from the first, not only by reason of her natural talent but by her capacity for hard work. There have been more brilliant technicians than she, but lovers of the ballet will remember her beautiful line, her artistry and her unfailing sense of style. Since she left Soviet Russia she has danced all the great rôles in ballet, and has been ballerina since the death of Diaghileff to de Basil's Ballet Russe and latterly to the Monte Carlo Ballet Russe—a long tale of triumphs, disappointments, travel and hard work. She has had to overcome fatigue, jealousies and privations in the pursuit of her art, but she has never lost her ideals—"I love to dance," she says, "and as long as I can improve I will dance. When you no longer improve, it is time to stop."

D. C. B.



"It's rather like a bottle-party—everybody brings something for export."



"Congratulations, darling. I only hope you will be as happy as people hoped George and I would be."

Manners and Customs of a Loyal Dominion

FOOTBALL

THE one thing on which every New Zealander would agree is that football takes first place; in bars, trains, drawing-rooms and newspapers, as well as on playing fields. It is the only winter sport. (Find me the New Zealander who says "game.")
Q. Do you play much sport? *A.* Football, of course . . .)

Golf has been heard of, there was an unconfirmed rumour that an Indian hockey-team was out here once, and a man with a funny name came out before the war to teach ski-ing, but he was probably interned.

There is only one kind of football—the sort where you pick up the ball and run with it, bitterly resisting the

opposing players' efforts to bring you down in the mud and trample on you. If anyone should say that soccer, or Association football, is played, don't believe him: he is obviously not a New Zealander. To be quite honest, a few people are said to play soccer. I know a man who says he has seen them, but they are beneath contempt, and none of the Provincial Rugby Unions has even suggested lynching them.

The best football is played in secondary schools. The very best football was played at your own secondary school the years you were in the first fifteen. In spite (or because) of this, the All Blacks of one year are never quite as good as those of the years before. There are three inevitable reasons for this:

- (1) The Selectors are no good.
- (2) We should never have given in to Britain on the wing forward question.
- (3) The forwards don't work so hard as they used to, and the backs are not so clever.

Add to these of course that youth is becoming decadent.

Still, the All Blacks are the best in the world, and have never been beaten. Not really and truly beaten. The team which toured Britain in 1935 was a little unlucky in meeting Obolensky, who seemed to be able to run faster than is usual in a wing three-quarter. If the 1935 touring team was unlucky with Obolensky, the teams which met the Springboks in 1937 in New Zealand

were unlucky in the Selectors. The best team was looking on, and the Springboks were far larger than is customary. Their scrum, it was pointed out, would have made a very good nucleus for an armoured regiment to win the Spanish Civil War. Again, the Springboks were very good footballers, but so *orthodox*. Their tries were almost all scored by their backs, who were each a little quicker than the opposing back, thus allowing the wing three-quarters room to score fairly frequently. The All Blacks at their best would have overcome them with brilliance.

Football throughout New Zealand is organized on a strictly competitive basis. Town clubs play competitions, the winner at the end of the season receiving a banner, cup, trophy, vase, or emblem; country clubs play competitions with each other and with town clubs; provinces for a shield donated by a former governor-general, and bilaterally for minor trophies; and at the end of a season, if a touring team is not in the country, an inter-Island match is held. Any game not in the framework of a competition is known as a friendly match, and is treated as such.

HORSES

After football, horses are the next best thing: a few of the thick square ones ladies and gentlemen ride, and a few of the small hairy ones nice children ride, but mostly the tall, lean, burnished type, ridden by little men with leather faces and prominent knees. There are also trotting horses, so-called because they don't trot but pace; that is, they move a whole side at a time, in a motion rather like a duck with four legs, only a good deal quicker. These horses pull little carts whose seats are so small that the drivers are really suspended by the reins, and they (the horses) are hung about with more leather gear than you would find on a day's march in Texas. Incidentally we have been dubious of the goodwill of Americans ever since our chestnut, Phar Lap, found arsenic spray on the grass of his paddock in California in 1930.

Our race-tracks are not bits of tame heath like some of yours, but oval, specially built stadia, so that one can see the horses some of the time. People spend a lot of money at the races. Most of it goes on the tote, which was invented by the brother of a former archbishop of the Dominion. Bookies are against the law, and so have to stay at home, surrounded by telephones and bothered occasionally by the police. This is not altogether

a disadvantage, for the bookie can assume a harassed expression when the favourite comes home, plead his shocking insecurity, and impose a ten-pound limit. Most bookies are assessed for super tax, and pay cheerfully.

The people who watch the races are much the same as anywhere else. They all walk on your feet, and if you take time off during a race to watch their faces you worry a little when you confront your shaving mirror next morning. It can only be a matter of time before you look like that too.

NORTH AND SOUTH

The beer is thinner in the north and bathing-costumes are briefer. The trams travel faster in Auckland and tram-drivers have quicker tempers than in Invercargill, which is at the bottom end of the country, towards the South Pole. These differences may be due to climate or to the fact that most Scottish settlers made for the south, where there was said to be gold in large quantities.

If you are from the north, the South Island is slow, cold, inhospitable, primitive, and mostly populated by sheep, while to a South Islander the north is insincere, hectic, go-getting, muggy, and entirely inhabited by cows.

SCENERY

There is a great deal of this, vertical, horizontal, bush covered, bare or volcanic. New Zealanders at Geneva, and later at San Francisco, were pointed out as curiosities because of their international outlook, and this may well be due to the fact that their country includes a piece of Switzerland, a soupçon of steppe, two patches of coastal Norway, some rather blasted heath, a good deal of rolling, English-looking farmland, and several Scottish lochs, as well as some highly original bush and forest country.

GOVERNMENT

By talk mostly, and by talk of violence at election time. Violence has yet to appear. The present Government is described as THEY by its opponents (THEY shackled us with regulations, THEY showered us with forms, crippled us with taxation, stole our rights, etc.), and WE by its supporters. (WE have done more for the farmers than they realize, Churchill said WE didn't put a foot wrong in our war effort, WE shall go back with a bigger majority than ever in 1946.)

Elections are held in October when football has finished, but cricket barely started, tennis and the races are in the

doldrums and the beaches not yet thickly covered. Many people thus have the opportunity of voting.

THE LAW

Mostly observed. We are rather scared of officials, more so than Australians. But there are exceptions. There is a law which says you may not drink at a dance-hall at any time, or at a hotel after 6 P.M. This is pretty harsh, and was introduced when a lot of men were out of the country between the years 1914-18. The results aren't difficult to imagine. Between 5 and 6 P.M. the bars are teeming like a drop of pond water under a microscope. Elbows rise and fall with precision and dexterity, and the bell in the cash register makes the place sound like VE Day in a cathedral town. At 6 P.M. the keener types buy two or three doz. on the hoof and totter out into the night, while family men, sloshing like an awning after a rain-storm, take their indigestion home to tea. It is usually possible, later, to regain entrance after three knocks on a side door and a muttered pass-word, but except on feast-days and times of national rejoicing when everybody is there, after-hours drinking is a cheerless and jumpy business.

The younger citizens, when out dancing, are indefatigable. Anything goes that can be carried on the hip. There is no bad plonk—just good and very good. If the liquid smokes it is about right in strength, but if it bursts into flames some say there is cause for doubt. Two of the better recipes are known as V1 and V2.

The Reluctant Shepherdess

SHE sits, the lady of my despair, by old obstructive sheep who stand in silent clumps and stare, who look but do not leap. She leans her crook upon the gate through which her flock should clamber and settles down inanimate to read *Forever Amber*.

Her collie, straying widdershins, turns homeward to his kennel; she has not seen the aspirins nor heard of Alice Meynell. Though moons may rise and stars may set, she bars the road to sleep, my shepherdess who will not let me count her ruddy sheep. V. G.

Operation Snowball

I

To "A" Branch, X Corps District HQ,
BAOR, from D.A.A.G., YZ Sub-Area
HQ, BAOR.

Direction is sought, please, on "A" policy in the matter of British officers subjected to snowball attacks by German children in this theatre.

II

To "A" Branch, X Corps District HQ,
BAOR, from Commander, YZ Sub-Area HQ, BAOR.

It is regretted that this HQ's previous memo on Snowballing of Officers by German children was considered frivolous by your branch. Far from being the laughing matter evidently considered at your HQ, the position here has, with the early arrival of severe weather, become critical, and it is hoped that you will now give it your more serious attention.

Snowball attacks on officers were at first of a trivial and sporadic nature, occasional snowballs thrown by young children striking junior officers with-causing serious damage, but during the past week matters have taken on a much graver aspect and a number of senior officers have been struck. From reports which have reached the writer, and from his own unfortunate experiences, it would seem that the attacks are now more organized in nature than hitherto, are being made by older children, with harder snow, and are

being directed almost exclusively against officers of field rank and above, this latter point being due, it is thought, not (as was suggested by the CRA on being slightly wounded last Thursday) to the attacks being directed by an underground movement of subaltern officers, but to the naturally more important and dignified appearance of senior officers making a greater appeal to the childish mind as a target (a red hat-band having much the same effect as a top-hat of other days).

Counter-measures taken by this HQ have not, so far, met with a great deal of success. This is attributed to

(a) The extreme mobility, aptitude for natural camouflage, and skill in taking rapid avoiding action shown by the snowballers.

(b) The unhelpful attitude, verging at times on mutiny, of the police, both civil and military, other ranks of which appear frequently to derive enjoyment from the discomfort, loss of dignity and even pain experienced by their superior officers under snowball fire.

(c) Lack of direction on policy from above.

It is therefore earnestly requested that the subject be considered by your HQ, and a Directive issued.

III

To Commander, YZ Sub-Area, from
ADC to Commander, X Corps District.

The Commander directs me to

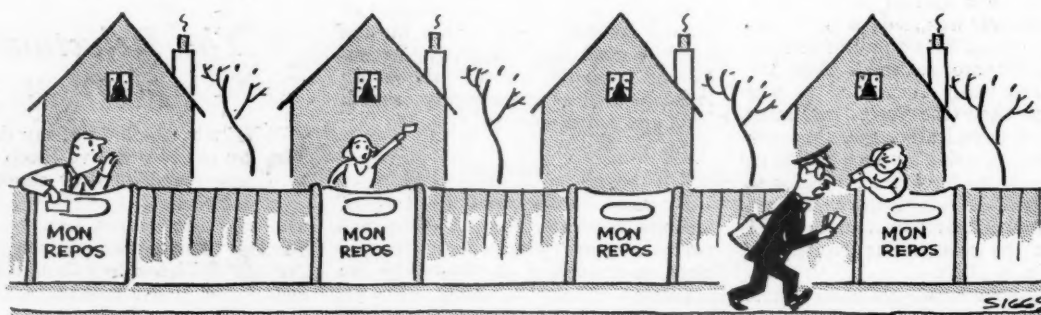
convey his concern at your communication on the subject of "Officers, snowballing of, by children, enemy." The Commander is of the opinion that a well-disciplined officer should accept a little good-natured snowballing in the spirit of childish fun with which it is offered, thus demonstrating to the German populace the sportsmanship and sense of humour of the British race. He attributes the evident failure of your officers to do this to a lack of discipline and control in the Sub-Area generally, and he directs me to say that he will call on you personally within the next two days to discuss the matter on these lines.

IV

(THREE DAYS LATER)

To Commander, YZ Sub-Area, from
ADC to Commander, X Corps District.

The Corps District Commander directs me to express his grave concern at the outburst of civil disturbances in your Sub-Area, involving attacks on officers of the highest rank by the younger section of the German populace, armed with missiles constructed of snow. He directs me to say that he intends taking action in the matter personally as soon as he is able to leave his room, where, following his visit to your HQ yesterday, he is unfortunately confined with contusions of the spine, abnormal blood-pressure, and severe frost-bite of the left ear.



"This craze for standardization will drive me barmy."

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"Look, Mother! This floor makes a jolly fine mirror now you've polished it with 'MANSION.'"

MANSION

ANTISEPTIC
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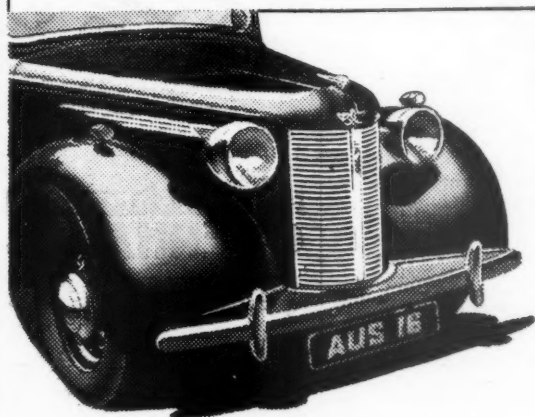
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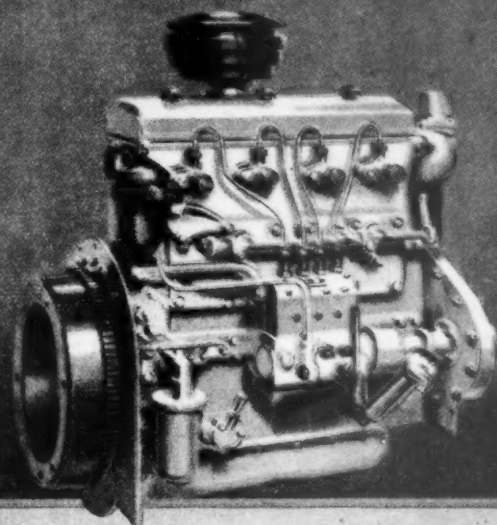
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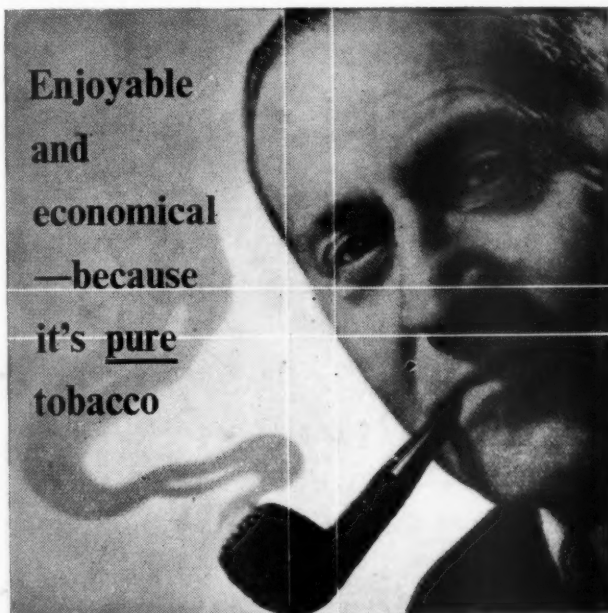
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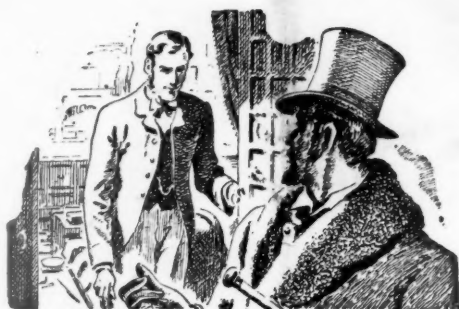
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